

BOOK REVIEWS

DISEASES OF THE SKIN. By Oliver S. Ormsby, M.D., Rush Professor of Dermatology Emeritus, University of Illinois, and Hamilton Montgomery, M.D., M.S., Associate Professor of Dermatology and Syphilology, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research, Graduate School, University of Minnesota, Rochester. Seventh Edition. Lea & Febiger. 1948.

Ormsby's textbook, always the old reliable in dermatology, has been brought right up to date in this 1948 seventh edition. The authors have done a most thorough job of incorporating in it the recent advances in dermatology; almost every page indicates a thorough study of the newer and correct literature.

The junior author, particularly well known for his work in histopathology, has rendered an invaluable service by thoroughly covering the field of laboratory diagnosis.

The bibliography, carried at the bottom of the pages, is quite voluminous and hence of value for careful study of a given subject.

Every physician or student who is interested in dermatology-syphilology should have this new edition in his library.

PSYCHOBIOLOGY AND PSYCHIATRY—A Textbook of Normal and Abnormal Human Behavior. By Wendell Muncie, M.D., Practicing Psychiatrist; Chairman, Medical Advisory Board, Seton Institute, Baltimore, Md. Second Edition with 70 illustrations. The C. V. Mosby Company. 1948.

By far the most striking change in this edition from the first is the color of the cover from blue to red. In addition, by employing thinner paper and eliminating the lengthy historical survey at the end, the bulk of the volume has been materially reduced. The convulsive disorders have graduated to the dignity of chapter treatment, and an additional short chapter treats of newer physical treatment methods, namely shock and leucotomy. In other respects there is little difference in the two editions.

One might have hoped that one so closely associated with Adolf Meyer would present a clear and understandable exposition of this school of Psychiatry. In this reviewer's opinion this has unfortunately not been accomplished. One finishes this book with the firm opinion, in spite of the author's protestations to the contrary, that the main virtue of Psychobiology is its eclecticism, its greatest vice the introduction of still another terminology to confuse the student.

The presentation of case material to illustrate the various reaction types is excellent, and the special terminology of the Psychobiologist is sufficiently explained and paralleled with more familiar terms to clarify the classification in this regard.

Those conditions which it is now fashionable to consider as "psychosomatic" are given adequate treatment. The author remains non-committal in failing to give a definite opinion regarding the primary importance of specific constitutional and environmental factors in the production of these entities, which at the present time seems the wise and conservative thing to do.

THE TREATMENT OF RHEUMATISM IN GENERAL PRACTICE. By W. S. C. Copeman, M.D. Fourth Edition. The Williams & Wilkins Co. 1946.

This is the fourth edition of a book first published in 1933, and, as the author writes in his preface, makes no pretense of being a textbook. Even so, a wide range of subjects is included, some of which, e.g., the chapter on endocrines, could be deleted. Part I is a discussion of rheumatic fever, which omits mention of the relationship of streptococcal infection to this disease. The chapter on rheumatoid arthritis, only 17 pages, contains a wealth of information.

There are contradictory passages in different sections on diet and many drugs recommended which are no longer used by well-informed physicians in the United States. The book has little to recommend it to the general practitioner; the specialist on rheumatic disease will find in it some interesting material.

EPILEPSY, The Annual Symposium of the Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Disease. Proceedings of the Association held jointly with the International League against Epilepsy, December 13 and 14, 1946, New York. Research Publications Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Disease. Volume XXVI. Editorial Board, William G. Lennox, M.D., H. Houston Merritt, M.D., and Thomas E. Bamford, M.D. With 167 illustrations and 56 Tables. The Williams & Wilkins Company. 1947.

This book of 650 odd pages, 167 illustrations and 56 tables presents the latest studies and opinions on Epilepsy by the outstanding authorities on this subject in this country and abroad. The volume consists of 45 papers dealing with almost every phase of convulsive disorders, including sections on the historical aspects of the subject, heredity and pathology, experimental studies, electroencephalography, treatment, special contributions from the experience of the recent war and, finally, the psychological and social aspects of Epilepsy. Especially valuable are the questions, answers, comments and discussions appended to a high percentage of the contributions. The quality of this forum of discussion can be appreciated from the fact that the names of such authorities as Lennox, Penfield, Merritt, Walker, Gibbs, Fulton, Cobb, McCulloch and Jasper appear again and again.

As the third symposium on Epilepsy in the 26 annual meetings of the Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Disease since 1920, the volume amply reflects the wide interest and rapid advances made in this subject since the previous symposiums of 1922 and 1929. Particularly noteworthy are the contributions in three aspects of the subject; the physiological and biochemical basis of convulsive disorders as determined by experimental methods (17 contributions), the advances in both experimental and clinical studies made possible by electroencephalography (24 contributions) and the great advances in anti-convulsive therapy, which have been achieved by neurophysiological and experimental pharmacological methods (7 contributions).

From the standpoint of fundamental pathogenesis, the electrolyte studies of Colfer, the biochemical studies of Gurdjian, Webster and Stone and the biochemical and enzymatic studies of Pope, Morris, Jasper, Elliott and Penfield were of special interest. In another paper Penfield and Jasper propose and adduce evidence to support the interesting theory that the diencephalon is "the highest level" of cerebral function to which the cerebral cortices serve a subservient role. They propose that as a central system, the diencephalon acts to unify and integrate the activity of the more specialized cortical areas in the two hemispheres.

Experimental reproduction of the electroencephalographic pattern typical of petit mal was achieved by Jasper and Droogleever-Fortuyn by stimulation of the massa intermedia and by Chenoweth and St. John following the intravenous administration of fluoroacetic acid. Additional papers of electroencephalographic importance were the frequency analyzer of Grey Walter and the increased incidence of seizure discharges and epileptic foci in epileptic patients when the electroencephalographic recording was obtained by Gibbs and Gibbs with the patient asleep. The papers on Mesantoin by Kozol and by Loscalzo and on the tridione by Davis and Lennox were of particular interest to the pharmacologist and the neurologist.